

### **REMARKS**

Claims 2-21 are pending. Claim 1 is canceled. Claims 8, 14, 18 and 21 are amended herein.

#### **Claim Amendments**

Claims 8 and 21 are amended to recite the step of “moving the laser means with respect to the joint while keeping a component of the angle of incidence of said laser means oriented along the same direction as relative motion between said laser means and said joint and keeping said laser means pointed towards a portion of the surface that remains to be welded, thereby forming an elongated weld.” Support for this amended language is found in original claim 1 and the original specification at page 4, lines 15-24.

Claim 14 has been amended to correct a clerical error resulting in the double inclusion of the term “lies.”

Claim 18 has been amended to correct a clerical error resulting in the omission of the term “method.”

No new matter has been added to the claims.

#### **Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §112**

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for the unclear recitation of “The according to ...”. Applicant has amended the language in question to recite “The method according to ...”.

#### **Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103**

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 21, 2-5 and 8-17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant’s Admitted Prior

Art (AAPA) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,143,998 (Mattes) and the handbook Welding Skills and Practices (WSP).

In order for a claimed invention to be obvious, all of the claim recitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. In re Royka, 490 F.2d 981, 180 USPQ 580 (CCPA 1974). Independent claims 21 and 8 have been amended to recite a method including “moving the laser means with respect to the joint while keeping a component of the angle of incidence of said laser means oriented along the same direction as relative motion between said laser means and said joint *and keeping said laser means pointed towards a portion of the surface that remains to be welded*, thereby forming an elongated weld.” (emphasis added) Thus, the claimed invention is directed to a “pushed” welding method. None of the cited references teach the aforementioned features.

AAPA discusses brazing, direct induction and resistance welding techniques as well as welding techniques including irradiating the entire surface of a contact plate.

Mattes discloses using spot welds for joining two contact portions. Moreover, Mattes also discloses embossing the two contact portions to be joined so as to offer the same surface to the laser beam, thereby reducing reflections during the welding process.

WSP discloses an arc welding process, in which the electrode is always kept pointed towards the portion of the surface that has already been welded. That is, the electrode is kept pointed in a direction that is substantially opposite the direction of welding. Thus, WSP teaches a “drawn” welding method, as opposed to the presently claimed “pushed” welding process. As set forth in the present specification, it is an object of the claimed invention to overcome such a “drawn” welding method, since it has been found to be unsuitable for laser welding. Therefore, WSP actually teaches away from the claimed invention.

None of these references teach or suggest the claimed method including, in particular, keeping a component of the angle of incidence of the laser means oriented along the same direction as relative motion between the laser means and the joint and keeping the laser means

pointed towards a portion of the surface that remains to be welded. Therefore, the combination of the disclosures of the references does not result in the claimed invention. For at least this reason, claims 21, 2-5 and 8-17 are allowable over the applied prior art.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 6, 7 and 18-20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's Admitted Prior Art (AAPA) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,143,998 (Mattes) and the handbook Welding Skills and Practices (WSP), and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,230,930 (Chang et al.).

Claims 6, 7 and 18-20 all depend from claim 21. As stated above, AAPA, Mattes and WSP fail to teach or suggest the method of claim 21 because they do not teach or suggest, individually or in combination, a method including moving a laser means with respect to a joint while keeping a component of the angle of incidence of the laser means oriented along the same direction as relative motion between the laser means and the joint and keeping the laser means pointed towards a portion of the surface that remains to be welded. Chang et al. also fail to teach or suggest these features. Therefore, the combination of AAPA, Mattes, WSP and Chang et al. does not render claims 6, 7 and 18-20 obvious.

### *Conclusion*

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 22-0185, under Order No. 22106-00060-US1 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

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Respectfully submitted,

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